

The “Disabled Child in Home Care” or “Katie Beckett” Program

Some Vermont children with disabilities need the care they would get in an institution. The Disabled Child in Home Care (DCHC) program, also called the Katie Beckett program, lets them get this care at home. This may include daily nursing services, therapies, and more. To qualify, the child must need a level of care that is normally only provided in an institution. (See # 4 below.) The program lets children in families whose income is too high to qualify for Dr. Dynasaur get Medicaid. There is no cost to the family. It is called the Katie Beckett program after the first child to get it.

What are the rules to get this program?

1. The child must be under age 19.
2. Social Security’s Disability Determination Section must say the child is disabled.
3. The **child’s** income and assets must meet Medicaid rules. **The parent’s income and assets don’t count.**
4. The child must need care on a daily basis. It must be the kind of care that is normally only given in a:
 - Hospital **OR**
 - Skilled Nursing Facility **OR**
 - Intermediate Care Facility for Individuals with an Intellectual Disability (ICF/IID) **OR**
 - Psychiatric Hospital
 - The child’s doctor must document the level of care the child needs. The doctor must say that this care can be given at home.
 - The cost of home care must be the same or less than care in an institution.

What is an institutional level of care? It is services, professional expertise, and technology typically only provided in institutions. See #4 above for the four kinds of institutions this covers. A doctor must document what level of care the child needs. The doctor must say if the child can get that care at home. Does the child need intensive behavioral services or physical or occupational therapy? That is not enough to meet the level of care rules. To learn more about level of care, look at this back of this page. You also can see the tool used to assess if level of care [on the Agency of Human Services website](#).



How will this program work with school services? The child may also qualify for special education services. Some children who qualify may need to get educational services at home. The child will also have visits from nurses or other professionals. They can contribute important information to the IEP Team. School personnel must work with the family and these professionals to set up a schedule.

How is institutional level of care determined? Institutional level of care is determined by clinicians at Social Security's Disability Determination Section. Historically, there was no standardized assessment tool for making this determination.

Beginning January 1, 2024, Vermont Medicaid will use a standardized assessment tool. It will determine level of care for all new and renewed DCHC/Katie Beckett applications. The tool will be administered by trained clinicians. Using the tool, two screeners would answer the same way for the same individual. It should make level of care decision criteria clearer and more consistent among different screeners. The new assessment tool does **not** change the legal standard for qualifying.

For a child to meet any of the 4 levels of care described below:

1. That level of care must be needed for at least the next 12 months.
2. In most cases, the care must be prescribed by the child's treating physician.
3. The child's records must have clinical justification for needing that level of care. There must be supporting medical documentation. **AND**
4. The child's doctor and documentation show in-home care is appropriate.

Hospitals focus primarily on medical care. For this level of care, the child must have a severe or potentially unstable medical condition. They must need skilled observation and assessment multiple times a day. They must also need electronic monitoring, treatment and medication monitoring. Services, technology and professional expertise must equal those in an inpatient acute care facility.

Skilled nursing facilities – They help children who need daily licensed skilled nursing services and/or rehabilitation services. Prescribed services must be ones that are typically only provided in a skilled nursing facility.

Intermediate Care Facility for Individuals with Intellectual Disabilities or ICF/IID – The child must require active treatment due to a developmental disability **OR** they must have a related condition. It does **NOT** include intensive behavioral services which, by definition, are meant to be provided in a child's natural environment. The prescribed services must be ones that would typically only be provided in an ICF/IID.



Inpatient Psychiatric Hospitals are for children with a diagnosed disabling mental health condition. It must severely disrupt their ability to function at home, school and in the community. The child must need daily support, comprehensive treatment and close supervision. The goal is to stabilize symptoms and provide safety. The child must have marked or extreme impairments that:

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- Impact their safety and their ability to adequately care for themselves **OR**
- Impair their thought processes enough to interfere with daily life **OR**
- Cause severe and ongoing inability to control or regulate their emotional responses **OR**
- Cause thoughts and behaviors that put them at serious risk of harm to self or others.

What if a child is denied Katie Beckett or told their Medicaid will end? The family has the right to appeal to Vermont's Human Services Board. Are they already on Medicaid? They can keep Medicaid until there is a final decision in their appeal. **BUT** they must ask for continuing Medicaid coverage and meet appeal deadlines.

Have questions about this program? Call **1-800-250-8427**. Or refer interested parents to this number for information or to apply.

